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Ongoing priorities and themes

Information received from the United Nations system

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

I. Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat

II. United Nations Development Fund for Women

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I. Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat

Summary

The present document includes contributions received from divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, namely, the United Nations Statistics Division, the Division for the Advancement of Women, and the Governance and Public Administration Branch of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management. A note by the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Division for Social Policy and Development, will appear in a separate document.

The United Nations Statistics Division provided information on its new project to develop a new web site as a valuable tool through which to disseminate census data on national/ethnic group, language, religion and other topics related to indigenous peoples. The largest part of the project is expected to be completed by the dates of the fourth session of the Forum.

The Division for the Advancement of Women provided information on pursuing recommendations of the Forum on indigenous women in the context of the 10-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. It presented the substantive contribution of the Division to two important mechanisms working on women's issues with a view to adding an indigenous perspective: the Task Force on Indigenous Women of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and the Intradepartmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues. In addition, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women continues the reviewing of the situation of indigenous women in examining reports of States in a systematic manner.

The Governance and Public Administration Branch of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management explored means of including indigenous issues in its various programmes, projects, expert consultations, research and dissemination activities.

Contributions from divisions and branches

1. Contribution from the United Nations Statistics Division

(a) Introduction

1. Given the strong interest in issues relevant to indigenous peoples demonstrated by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and the relevance to indigenous issues of the United Nations Statistics Division's pre-existing data collection on ethnicity, language and religion, the Division has begun a collaborative effort to review and make public the data. The Division is pleased to cooperate with the secretariat of the Forum in this area, in order to provide follow-up to the Forum's recommendations. This work will begin with existing data, reviewing the ways in

which indigenous peoples are already being studied by Member States. The initial focus will be on the following questions: What relevant statistics do we already have that have not been presented in the context of indigenous peoples? How are Governments currently studying their indigenous peoples in censuses? What are the limitations of the existing data?

2. **As part of our collaboration with the Forum, the Division will expand its web site to include the ethnicity data, highlighting the information regarding indigenous peoples, and linking it to the Forum's current web site.** This new web site will increase the visibility of statistics pertaining to indigenous people and satisfy the existing demand. This is an opportunity for us to expand the dissemination of Statistics Division data to a larger audience of users.

(b) Development of a web site through which to disseminate census data on national/ethnic group, language, religion and other topics related to the study of indigenous peoples

3. The United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, plans to develop a web site for the purpose of disseminating existing population census data provided to the Statistics Division by national statistical authorities on language, religion, ethnicity and other topics that may be relevant to the study of indigenous peoples. The web site will be linked to the Forum web site. This project will support both the upcoming *Demographic Yearbook* Special Census Topics, volume 2: Social Characteristics, and the programme of work of the Forum.

4. The web site will be developed as part of the newly designed web site of the Statistics Division on Demographic and Social Statistics (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/default.htm) and will serve several important purposes. First, the data on ethnicity, language and religion have not been disseminated since 1993. The Statistics Division has collected a very large amount of population census data that has not yet been disseminated or analysed. It is planned that these data will become available through the publication of the *Demographic Yearbook* Special Census Topic, Social Characteristics, in June 2005. Second, the planned link with the Forum web page, which is very heavily trafficked, will increase the visibility of statistical data and help to maximize its utilization. Finally, disseminating the data publicly will allow all users to see both the limitations and the strengths of the current population census data. Researchers can determine whether and how existing data on nationality/ethnic group, language and religion may be used to capture indigenous populations. The Forum will hold its fourth session in May 2005, by which time it is expected that the major part of the project will have been completed.

2. Contribution from the Division for the Advancement of Women

(a) Response to recommendations addressed exclusively to the particular department/division under one or more items of the Forum's mandate

5. In preparation of the 10-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action[1] which will be conducted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session from 28 February to 11 March 2005, the Division for the Advancement of Women, in collaboration with the regional commissions, prepared a questionnaire to be used to compile information from

Governments on major achievements and obstacles in implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Part two of the questionnaire, entitled "Progress in implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and the further initiatives and actions identified in the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly", requested Governments to include information on actions implemented to address the situation of indigenous women.

6. As a result, 24 Governments provided information on indigenous women, specifically on the Government's measures, actions and policies aimed at improving the status of indigenous women and on the obstacles and challenges with respect to eliminating discrimination against indigenous women and overcoming their social and economic exclusion. The report of the Secretary-General submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session on the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality and peace for the twenty-first century" (E/CN.6/2005/2) contains a section summarizing these efforts (part three, sect. II.C).

7. The Division for the Advancement of Women participates in, and contributes to, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality Task Force on Indigenous Women. The Division contributed to an inventory of mandates, overview of programmes/activities focusing on indigenous women that have been carried out, and a strategy and work plan to mainstream indigenous women's issues in the work of United Nations organizations. Further information can be found in annex II to the February 2005 report of the Task Force prepared by the Forum secretariat (available from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/Report_Task%20Force_%20on_IW_final.doc (accessed 28 March 2005)).

8. The Division contributes to the Intradepartmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues. It participated in the meeting held on September 2004 where the follow-up actions to the Forum's third session and the preparation of the Forum's fourth session, among other topics, were discussed.

9. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women continues to review the situation of indigenous women in reporting States in a systematic manner. At its most recent session (January 2005), the Committee paid particular attention to the situation of indigenous women in Paraguay. Further information about the work of the Committee and the Commission on the Status of Women on indigenous women is contained in documents E/CN.19/2003/CRP.1 and E/CN.19/2004/CRP.5. The results of the third session of the Forum were made available to Committee members.

3. Contribution from the Governance and Public Administration Branch of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management

10. In its various programmes, projects, expert consultations, and research and dissemination activities, the Branch shall make a concerted effort to:

- **Undertake research to identify concerns and needs of indigenous peoples in issues related to public administration, in particular (a) public sector policy development, (b) public service delivery and (c) recruitment of indigenous peoples in the public service.**

- **Develop policy guidelines for increasing the participation of indigenous peoples in public decision-making and absorb the principles and practice in public administration technical assistance activities.**
- **Develop projects to enhance the capacity for engagement (through education, training, networking, capacity-building and other project activities) of indigenous peoples with respect to more effectively participating and having influence in public decision-making processes.**
- **Sensitize the public administration community and member State government counterparts on the necessity of conducting dedicated consultation processes with indigenous peoples in order to address their specific concerns in matters of public policy that affect them.**
- **Promote equal access to employment in the public service, and help countries develop strategies and guidelines to enhance the recruitment, promotion, retention and influence of indigenous peoples in the public service.**

II. United Nations Development Fund for Women

Summary

Since 1994, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has initiated various projects and programmes that have responded to the increased awareness of the need to incorporate gendered indigenous issues in the forefront of our agenda. Integrating indigenous women's rights is fundamental to UNIFEM and it seeks to more fully develop and expand its existing projects while eliciting the cooperation and support of other United Nations bodies and responding to the expressed needs of indigenous women's groups. The efforts of UNIFEM to address indigenous peoples' needs in the context of the Millennium Development Goals are shaped in response to regional realities and opportunities.

The situation of indigenous women in development processes is of significant importance to UNIFEM, particularly in the Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific regions. The UNIFEM programme focuses on advocacy for indigenous women's rights and eliminating discrimination against women. The approach of UNIFEM focuses on mainstreaming gender and women's human rights in its programme by engaging indigenous groups, particularly women, boys and girls, and enhancing civic engagement through strategic partnerships between associations and advocate groups. The UNIFEM Regional Office for the Andean Region is currently increasing its involvement in supporting the participation of indigenous women's groups in local, national, regional and global events and encouraging their inclusion in project initiatives. In Asia, the UNIFEM Regional Office in Bangkok fosters alliance-building among local, national and regional non-governmental organizations, inter alia, in the Philippines, to spur and launch advocacy for the rights of indigenous women.

Mainstreaming gender within the larger context of indigenous rights is at the core of the UNIFEM project implementation strategy. UNIFEM recognizes that incorporation of indigenous women's issues and distinct interests is an ongoing

process. As an international body that works as a mechanism to support the expressed needs of indigenous women and help facilitate a space so that these needs can be addressed, UNIFEM seeks to promote that process.

Suggestions and recommendations on the Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples are also included in the present report.

A. Response to recommendations addressed by the Forum exclusively to UNIFEM under one or more items of the Forum's mandate

11. There were no recommendations targeted exclusively at UNIFEM.

B. Response to recommendations of the Forum addressed to UNIFEM and other organizations or to the United Nations system in general under one or more items of the Forum's mandate

Recommendation No. 5 (E/2004/43, chap. I, para. 5): "Integrate the human rights, including the reproductive health rights, and special concerns and needs of indigenous women into their programmes and policies, and to report regularly to the Forum. The reports should contain detailed information on the strategies and policy assessments on the regional and national levels"

12. UNIFEM works cooperatively with indigenous women's organizations to determine the present status and expected future of their rights. These concerns are then integrated into short-term projects that respond to the long-term needs of the partner groups. It is not within the capacity of UNIFEM to report directly to the Forum but rather to facilitate a space in which indigenous women can express their concerns publicly on local and global levels. This is an ongoing process that UNIFEM hopes to develop more fully as indigenous women become increasingly participative and integrated into regional and international processes.

Recommendation No. 6 (E/2004/43, chap. I, para. 6 (a) and (b)): "Pay special attention to the issues related to maintaining the integrity of indigenous women and the gender dimension of racial discrimination against indigenous peoples. Organize a meeting with the objective of beginning a process to develop and adopt a general recommendation on indigenous women, including women living under colonization"

13. Maintaining cognizance of the racial discrimination against indigenous women is at the forefront of UNIFEM project initiatives and UNIFEM hopes that its projects will remain and become increasingly sensitive to the unique situation affecting indigenous women.

14. Indigenous women in Latin America share a history of colonization and oppression but their immediate situations are heterogeneous. In respect of this, UNIFEM has already supported national and regional dialogue among indigenous women from the region (for example, national consultations in Ecuador; Indigenous Women's Summit of the Americas, held in June 2004).

Summary of recommendation No. 8 (E/2004/43, chap. I, para. 8): "Mainstream indigenous gender issues and ... integrate the special needs and concerns of indigenous women into their programmes and policies"

15. UNIFEM has numerous partnerships with leaders of indigenous women's groups and subsequently integrates their unique experience and expertise into its programming. UNIFEM plays an active role in facilitating indigenous women's participation in inter-agency meetings and forums both regionally and globally. UNIFEM hopes that this initiative will continue and that, in cooperation with other organizations (both indigenous groups and women's groups), it will expand its capacity to support the international presence of indigenous women. UNIFEM has supported projects designed to create a dialogue between educational institutions and indigenous women's groups regarding indigenous women's issues and hopes that over the course of the next three years, there will be an increased exchange between academic institutions and indigenous women's groups, as UNIFEM feels that facilitating a space for indigenous women within educational institutions is an effective way to build capacity.

Recommendation No. 43 (E/2004/43, chap. I, para. 43 (a), (b) and (c)): Disseminate information on the rights of indigenous peoples in the local languages; train indigenous women in human rights and rule of law; provide technical assistance to Governments to establish fundamental rights of indigenous peoples

16. The Andean Regional Office is preparing training sessions with indigenous women's leaders in order to prepare them for the Forum's fourth session in May 2005. UNIFEM provides technical assistance for preparatory meetings with indigenous women's groups that are organized by the national women's mechanisms to strengthen national agendas for the 10-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Technical support will also be given to the national women's networks in the region with respect to their participation in the preparatory meetings at national and regional levels.

Recommendation No. 51 (E/2004/43, chap. I, para. 51): That "a workshop be convened within the framework of the 10-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in order to formulate strategies to protect vulnerable groups, such as indigenous peoples, especially taking into account the vulnerabilities of indigenous women and children"

17. UNIFEM is organizing several follow-up meetings with indigenous women's groups in order to facilitate the dissemination of information about the documents drafted at the 10-year review and to discuss the perspectives of diverse groups. UNIFEM will organize several national and regional follow-up meetings for the international meetings on indigenous women in New York. The partners collaborating in these efforts will include national women's machineries and the various indigenous organizations (the Centre for Indigenous People's Culture of Peru (CHIRAPAQ), the National Council of Indigenous Women of Ecuador (CONMIE) and the subsecretaries of the various indigenous organizations). Also, there will be post-conference training and sharing of information disseminated at the 10-year review in order to facilitate an understanding of the issues broached during the review and the way in which the indigenous communities can integrate the outcomes of the meeting.

C. Other significant information on recent policies, programmes, budgetary allocations or activities regarding indigenous issues within UNIFEM

18. The commitment of UNIFEM to including a feminized poverty perspective in the Millennium Development Goals process focuses on involving women in the monitoring of the Goals. With the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNIFEM is developing reports on gender analysis of the Goals in Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Guatemala, which will serve as an advocacy tool for including gender and women's participation in national Goal planning, reporting and monitoring. A regional report is also under way for the Caribbean.

D. Information and suggestions regarding the special theme of the fourth session: "Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples"

19. UNIFEM suggests that the following be taken into consideration:

- **The need to use existing statistical information disaggregated by sex and ethnicity in the Millennium Development Goal country reports and processes with a view to making women's, and particularly indigenous women's, situation visible and easily available so as to inform policy-making.**
- **The need to encourage national Governments to mainstream gender and race/ethnicity in their data-collection instruments (census, surveys, administrative records) so as to have information available on the situation of women and indigenous people.**
- **The need to foster the participation of women and indigenous people, particularly indigenous women, in national Millennium Development Goal-related processes (for example, consultations, reporting, monitoring) and provide them with tools that can facilitate said participation and influence (for example, data, advocacy training, etc.).**

Notes

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.